Unauthorised occupation of Lodhi era monuments

759. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 'Bara-Lao-Ka Gumbad' a Lodhi era heritage monument has been under unauthorized possession for over 50 years;

(b) the number of other monuments in Delhi still under adverse possession and the action proposed to be taken for their vacation and clearance;

(c) whether national and heritage monuments in Delhi are proposed to be given facelift before the Commonwealth Games, 2010; and

(d) if so, the estimated expenditure for the purpose and the likely share from various organisations therein?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Bara Lao Ka Gumbad is not a centrally protected monument. The Department of Archaeology, Govt. of NCT, Delhi (GNCTD) has informed that the monument was in the charge of DDA earlier. In the year 1990, DDA and the Department of Archaeology, GNCTD jointly initiated action for removal of all the 12 unauthorized residential units within the enclosure wall of the monument. After removal of these unauthorized constructions, DDA handed over the monument to the Department of Archaeology, GNCTD on 5.2.2009.

(b) There are encroachments in 11 centrally protected monuments in Delhi. In addition, the Department of Archaeology, Government of NCT, Delhi (GNCTD) has informed that there are 42 other monuments that have been encroached. Archaeological Survey of India and Department of Archaeology, GNCTD are regularly pursuing with Revenue, Police and Civic Authorities to remove the encroachments from these monuments.

(c) Yes, Sir. 46 centrally protected monuments in Delhi have been identified for facelift before the Common Wealth Games - 2010.

(d) An allocation of Rs.25.73 crores has been made for the purpose by the Central Government.

Protection of tombs in Andhra Pradesh

760. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is setting up a National Commission to promote and protect numerous heritage sites across the country especially tombs in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount to be allocated to each project; and

(d) the steps being taken to repair them in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Setting up of a National Commission on Heritage Sites is under active consideration of the Government. It is being envisaged

that the Commission would lay down broad policy guidelines and take steps to ensure that such guidelines are observed. The functions of the proposed Commission would include:

- tender advice to the Government on heritage matters.
- frame guidelines in the matter of conservation of heritage monuments and sites.
- study or cause to study important matters regarding conservation of heritage and submit reports to the Government.
- suggest appropriate amendments to the existing heritage legislations.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Promotion and development of historical and religious culture

†761. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any national policy has been formulated or proposed to be formulated by Government for the promotion and development of historical and religious culture;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the financial allocations made therefor by Government during the current financial year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) A National Committee for drafting a National Culture Policy was constituted on 11.11.2006. The term of the Committee was extended upto 30.6.2008. The Committee has deliberated on the issue. The members have put forth various views and the same are under consideration.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

National Commission for Heritage

762. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would set up a National Commission for Heritage to promote and protect heritage sites across the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government would disband the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) after the formation of commission; and

(d) if not, the reasons for having two identical establishments?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The Cabinet has approved the proposal of introduction of the National Commission of Heritage Sites Bill, 2009 in the current Session of Rajya Sabha.

(c) and (d) It is not envisaged to disband the archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as the purposes, focus and functions of ASI and the proposed National Commission on Heritage sites are different and complementary.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.